TEACHING OF PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE FOR FOREIGNERS: IMPLICATIONS OF THE PLURALITY OF CONCEPTS

O ENSINO DE LÍNGUA PORTUGUESA PARA ESTRANGEIROS: IMPLICAÇÕES DA PLURALIDADE DE CONCEITOS

ENSEÑANZA DE LENGUA PORTUGUESA PARA EXTRANJEROS: IMPLICACIONES DE LA PLURALIDAD DE CONCEPTOS

José Genival Bezerra FERREIRA[1]

ABSTRACT: The article presents preliminary results of a post-doctorate program at the Faculty of Education at the Universidade de São Paulo. It discusses the terminology used by universities to name the discipline Portuguese as a Foreign Language. As we know, this subject can be called additional language, heritage language, host language, among others. In this regard, the investigation seeks to understand whether there are reasons for the existence of so many denominations. In this sense, it is necessary to research whether the nomenclatures have different approaches and/or methodologies, to further understand the option to adopt them. For that, we applied a questionnaire, through Google Forms, to professors who work with the PLE in several university institutions, to know their perceptions about the subject. The results show that, in practice, most teachers do not make a difference between Portuguese Mother Tongue and Portuguese as a Foreign Language in terms of teaching approaches and are unaware of the particularities of the various existing conceptions.

KEYWORDS: Portuguese as Foreign Language. Teaching. Plurality of concepts.

RESUMO: *O artigo apresenta os resultados preliminares do pós-doutoramento na Faculdade de Educação da Universidade de São Paulo. Discute as terminologias utilizadas pelas universidades para denominar a disciplina Português Língua Estrangeira - PLE. Como sabemos, essa disciplina pode ser designada de língua adicional, língua de herança, língua de acolhimento, entre outras. Nesse particular, a investigação busca entender se há razões para a existência de tantas denominações. Nesse sentido, faz-se necessário pesquisar se as nomenclaturas têm abordagens e/ou metodologias diferentes, com vistas a entender a opção por adotá-las. Para tanto, aplicamos um questionário, por meio do Google Forms, a professores que trabalham com o PLE em diversas instituições universitárias, para conhecermos suas percepções sobre a temática. Os resultados demonstram que, na prática, a maioria dos docentes não fazem diferença entre Português Língua Materna - PLM e PLE quanto às abordagens de ensino, bem como desconhecem particularidades das várias concepções existentes.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Português Língua Estrangeira. Ensino. Pluralidade de conceitos.*

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[1] University of Santiago de Chile, (USACH), Santiago – Chile. Associate Professor at the Department of Linguistics and Literature. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5419-7449. E-mail: jose.ferreira@usach.cl

RESUMEN: *El artículo presenta los resultados preliminares de un posdoctorado en la Facultad de Educación da Universidade de São Paulo. Se analiza la terminología utilizada por las universidades para denominar la disciplina Portugués como Lengua Extranjera - PLE. Como sabemos, esta asignatura se puede denominar lengua adicional, lengua de herencia, lengua de "acolhimento" (acogida), entre otras. Al respecto, la investigación busca comprender si existen razones para la existencia de tantas denominaciones. En este sentido, es necesario investigar si las nomenclaturas tienen diferentes enfoques y / o metodologías, con miras a entender la opción de adoptarlas. Para esto, aplicamos un cuestionario, a través de Google Forms, a los profesores que trabajan con el PLE en varias instituciones universitarias, con el fin de conocer sus percepciones sobre el tema. Los resultados muestran que, en la práctica, la mayoría de los profesores no distinguen entre Portugués Lengua Materna - PLM y PLE en cuanto a enfoques de enseñanza. Además, desconocen las particularidades de las distintas concepciones existentes.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Portugués como Lengua Extranjera. Enseñanza. Pluralidad de conceptos.*

Introduction

The present study dialogues with the project Images of language: subject, displacement, knowledge and time, coordinated by professor Valdir Barzotto, from the Faculty of Education of the University of São Paulo - FEUSP, which proposes to investigate the mechanisms that compete in the formation of images in multilingual contexts in four argumentative instances: the State, the Church, the University, and the Community. For this article, we limit ourselves to the scope of the University, as a producer of the image of Portuguese language teaching for foreigners under its different conceptions, which is articulated with our experience as a PLE professor in the Applied Linguistics to Translation undergraduate course at the University of Santiago from Chile.

In this sense, the article is inserted, as we mentioned, in the "university instance", stressing the teaching of Portuguese for speakers of other languages, because this institution treats the teaching of PLE through various terminologies, building different images in certain contexts that require multiple focus. Thus, each context generated a subject related to the teaching of Portuguese, with different denominations, which needs to be studied.

The teaching of Portuguese to foreigners has little scientific and didactic production focused on pedagogical practice, perhaps due to the lack of consistency of linguistic and educational policies directed to the area. We can mention, of the few that exist, the initiatives created by the Instituto Camões (from Portugal) and that of the lecturers of Portuguese teaching abroad (from the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Relations). In addition to these

initiatives, we can mention the few universities that have a specific degree in PLE in Brazil. These are initiatives that do not cover the demands of PLE teaching.

The various denominations/conceptions created further confuse the research process on the subject. Although the projects exist, however, there is a lack of research to advance in the area, mainly in the Letters courses of the universities so that, in the initial formation, the undergraduate student is already heading for a new career of research and the profession in the area of teaching of Portuguese for non-native speakers. For Almeida Filho (2017), there are initiatives for the teaching of Portuguese as a Second Language and a Foreign Language (PL2/PLE) from the actions of some universities or with the support of the initiative of some private schools and publications on a smaller scale, with official government support through the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Education, with the implementation of the Certificate of Proficiency in the Portuguese Language for Foreigners (Celpe-Bras) to assess proficiency.

From this perspective, the various denominations for teaching Portuguese to foreigners obscure the understanding of professionals involved in the teaching-learning process of the Portuguese language for foreigners. Among the various terminologies, we find: Portuguese as a Foreign Language (PLE); Portuguese Second Language (PL2); Portuguese Non-Mother Language (PLnM); Portuguese Heritage Language (PLH); Portuguese Home Language (PLAc); Portuguese Additional Language (PLA); Portuguese for Specific Purposes (PFE), among others. For this reason, it is urgent to discuss these terminologies for better clarity.

So, it is convenient to analyze the teaching practice and its perceptions about these terms to classify the teaching of Portuguese to foreigners, because, in practice, we assume that they are not justified, so that would be to carry out a division of Portuguese that is the same. We consider that the difference lies in the way of approaching and thematizing to meet the demand of the student in the acquisition phase of Portuguese as a foreign language, as a second language, or as an additional language to communicate.

That said, the main objective of the article is to verify the perceptions of PLE teaching built according to the various terminologies and to prove to what extent those constructed in the classroom, by the teacher's performance, coincide with what is recommended in the bibliography of the area. To achieve these objectives, we applied questionnaires to professors who work with PLE in Brazilian and foreign universities.

Based on the results of this study, we intend to provoke a theoretical and methodological reflection on the place of the PLE teacher, as well as faced with these trends that are so striking in the teaching of PLE and that affect their performance in class, it is worth asking ourselves: how do they understand these different nomenclatures? Which methodology

to use for each specificity? What teaching materials do you use? These and other questions will be analyzed to bring some significant conceptual and methodological advances, as we understand that the results of this investigation can contribute to other research works that focus on the themes of PLE teaching.

Theoretical foundation

In this section, we contextualize and present classification concepts used for teaching Portuguese to foreign students. As opposed to the concept of Portuguese Mother Language (PLM) or Language 1 (L1), the concept of Portuguese Non-Mother Language (PLnM) emerged. The PLnM concept is broad and encompasses the concepts of Portuguese as a Language 2 (PL2) and Portuguese as a Foreign Language (PLE). These terminologies can address both language acquisition and learning. Crossing these classifications, we have Portuguese as a heritage language (PLH); Portuguese as an additional language (PLA); Portuguese as the host language (PLAc); and Portuguese as a language for special purposes (PLFE). There are several terminologies to teach foreigners who do not speak Portuguese or foreigners who want to deepen their knowledge.

Portuguese Mother Language (PLM) is the mother tongue, the one spoken by parents and other family members. In other words, it is the language of the community, being the first language acquired by individuals initially exposed to it. In this context, there is an affective relationship with the everyday language that predominates in the society where the individual is inserted. According to Maia (2019), this is also the language used by teachers to teach foreign students.

According to Altenholfen (2002), the mother tongue is a dynamic concept, as it varies according to traits considered relevant to the moment in which the speaker experiences it, and might be the first language he learns or also when he learns this L1 concomitantly with another language; by sharing specific uses and functions, but with a dominant language, identified by the language of the parents, which has an affective value of its own. In the situation of early and simultaneous bilingualism, the speaker can internalize two languages with equivalent domains between them.

Lemke (2010) agrees with Altenholfen (2002) regarding the possibility of the mother tongue being L1 or L2 when acquired simultaneously. This is possible today in Brazil, as the languages of immigration are cultural heritage and, in some parts of the country, the language of the immigrant is disseminated for commercial and tourist purposes, mainly in the South, a

situation different from the times when foreigners could not use your mother tongue. Therefore, foreign parents can use both Portuguese and their language to converse with their children, who acquire two languages at the same time: Portuguese and their parents'.

For Flores (2013), Portuguese Non-Mother Language (PLnM) has a broad concept, including different forms of acquisition, learning, and mastery of the Portuguese language, in addition to being a concept specific to the context of Portuguese in Portugal.

According to Baltazar (2019), the concept of the non-mother tongue encompasses the concepts of L2 and Foreign Language (FL), which can cause a lot of confusion related to the uses of the language. From this perspective, the LPnM is the PLE, including all the denominations given to the teaching of Portuguese to foreigners.

Acquisition of a second language (L2) is not just about learning L2, but also the third, fourth, and so on. In the case of the Portuguese, the acquisition concerns PL2. Learning PL2 entails the acquisition of knowledge about a new language, attributing intelligible meanings when developing the communication necessary for discursive interaction. PL2 is learned in contact with this language in a teaching-learning context, through basic knowledge of the language, grammar, dictionaries, among others (MENEZES, 2014).

However, the acquisition of an L2 and an SL is similar, the first being unconscious, since, in practice, students have speech-language skills, as they dominate the cognitive ability and organization of thought acquired with the L1.

> Portuguese as a second language plays an active and continuous role in the formation of learners' identities, based on the concept that identity is not fixed. Thus, language, especially PL2, is constitutive and constituted by the identity of the learner, so that language allows people to negotiate their understanding of themselves in different places and moments in time, gaining access or not to the relationships of power and allowing them to position themselves through speech in social interactions (MAIA, 2014, p. 49, our translation).

FL in general, including PLE, is learned by the student and is based on the culture of the speaker who sees in the ability to communicate in an FL the opportunity to appropriate one of the essential skills of the language for personal fulfillment (MENEZES, 2014).

> The foreign student arrives in search of professional training in a master's or doctorate. For this, he needs to advance in social practices of academic literacy and for this reason, he must also advance in the level of knowledge of the language (LEURQUIN; OSÓRIO, 2019, p. 60, our translation).

From this perspective, the demand for PLE courses may be associated with the demands of foreign students who want to improve social practices, through the Portuguese language, and understand texts for masters and doctorates, as well as for other courses and purposes.

When thinking about the denominations PL2 and PLE, it implies recognizing Portuguese teaching for those who have a different L1. This situation makes it possible to see ways amid a variety of terminologies for teacher training. The multiplicity of names given to the subjects that address PL2/PLE is because the Portuguese language has multiple interests for those who seek to learn it.

> The communicative needs of PLE-PL2 learners in the contemporary context demand a teaching-learning approach capable of instigating students to interact effectively and adequately in different multicultural spaces (REIS, 2014, p. 35, our translation).

Associating these two terminologies allows the teacher to meet the demands of students for specific contextual particularities in their way of acting, adapting, and complementing, according to the objectives that lead foreigners to learn Portuguese as an L2/PLE. Teaching Portuguese as a foreign and/or second language should not be limited to nomenclatures. Denominations such as L2 and PLE could encompass all terminologies.

The important thing is for the teacher to consider that the classroom is heterogeneous because it is composed of beings that have diversity, even if they speak the same language, since they have beliefs, learning styles, demands, interests, preferences, goals, motivations. and divergent desires. For this reason, the teacher needs to be sensitive to the cultures of the students in the interaction during the classes, considering, in their practices, the culture, and the personal differences. It is necessary to understand that students are in the process of building and reconstructing knowledge and identities, which requires openness to the specificities and demands that arise. Due to this, the materials for teaching PL2-PLE need to be contextualized with the real needs of these subjects, and must be flexible,

The Portuguese Language Additional (PLA) was named that way because it is not the student's second language, as he already has two or more languages. The terminology "additional" fits this situation and might be a more appropriate definition.

> Many families consisting of a Brazilian mother and/or father (or, in some cases, even grandparents), who raise children (or grandchildren) abroad, experienced situations in which Portuguese was the language of family interaction, living with language(s) place(s) where children were, in general, educated and which, therefore, characterized the use of Portuguese as a

heritage language, even before the systematization of the use of this concept (BRASIL, 2000, p. 47, our translation).

Thus, the additional language refers to a language that the student decided to include in his repertoire because it is a language that is being learned and that is neither first nor second. For him, this is a foreign language that can be considered additional, because the student needs or wants to develop skills to communicate. In this sense, Dell'Isola (2012, p. 61, our translation) states that "the term additional language refers to a language that is being learned/experienced by the individual, in a positive way, with the subject as the agent of language."

According to Maia and Oliveira (2019), the conception of PLA is based on the processes of multiliteracies, interculturality that considers language as discourse, as well as a mediator in sociocultural relations. In this conception, the PLA focuses on communication and knowledge construction, with the development of multicultural skills, considering the student's participation through interaction.

The Curriculum Proposals for Teaching Portuguese Abroad – Portuguese as a Heritage Language (PLH) –, refers to migratory issues and focuses on Brazilian Portuguese. A large flow of Brazilians went abroad in the 20th and 21st centuries. It is estimated that more than three million Brazilians are living abroad, almost half of them in North America and a quarter in Europe. Families strive to maintain the Portuguese language both within the family and in the school environment (BRASIL, 2020). This document brings proposals for the teaching of PLH, considering the level, the language skills of expression, and oral and written comprehension, as well as its specific components.

The use of the heritage language concept already existed, but its use correlated with the Portuguese language is recent, despite its long trajectory.

From the 1990s onwards, the use of Brazilian Portuguese and Portuguese from other countries, where the language is the official language, increased the situations of family interaction abroad, thus contributing to the need to understand the phenomenon from a specific linguistic perspective. The heritage language has become a topic for academic studies to understand the social and linguistic complexity, with proposals and actions to develop and expand the LPH, starting its trajectory and expanding rapidly due to technological speed. This facilitated interaction between family members, teachers, members of associations, and groups that were formed to teach Portuguese and inherent cultural aspects for children born in other countries.

The Portuguese as a Welcoming Language (PLAc) is associated with human mobility phenomena that have been occurring in Brazil and Chile, for example. The countries have received many people from various parts of the world, such as Haitians and Venezuelans, among others. Generally, they come in search of protection, freedom, and security. This situation needs public policies so that they can live with dignity, as citizens in a refugee situation. In addition, these subjects who move from their countries need to learn the language of the place to communicate, the host language, in this case, Portuguese. According to Barbosa (2016), PLAc interrelates the concepts of social insertion, language acquisition, and communication.

> [...] the host language has the pragmatic function of providing basic teachings of real use for everyday life and has a particularly important role to play in the process of interaction of immigrants in Brazil, the host country of immigrant or refugee students (SANTOS, 2018, p. 23, our translation).

PLAc is not a foreigner's desire or choice. Its purpose ends in the reception itself because if he decides to learn the language, he will learn Portuguese to interact, work, or for his survival in the country.

According to Oliveira (2019), studies on PLAc are recent in Brazil and have grown a lot since the beginning of asylum requests by Syrians and Haitians in the early 2010s. In addition, since 2017, the country has received a very significant flow of refugees. Venezuelan families, who cross the border to the north. They come to escape the hunger and misery they experience in the neighboring country.

Language Teaching for Specific Purposes (ELFE) can be defined as instrumental teaching that applies to the mother tongue or foreign language, to meet the demands of the target situation, whose teaching extends to the teaching of languages in educational contexts for a specific nature. This teaching strategy meets the specificities of the student and makes it possible to meet their demands. In this way, students:

> [...] they started to be respected as the main subject of the teaching-learning process, they began to be seen as unique individuals, each with their needs and interests, directly influencing their motivation to learn - it is justified, in this way, to the emergence of an approach that focuses on the student's needs as its main characteristic (LOBO, 2017, p. 74, our translation).

The focus in teaching ELFE is student-centered, focusing on specific purposes, and this can be exemplified with the Mais Médicos program, which recruited doctors from Cuba. It was necessary to work with them in instrumental Portuguese, to contextualize them with Portuguese to carry out consultations and treatments in Brazilian patients. In this case, they

learned Portuguese as a Language for Specific Purposes (PLFE). This also occurs in international events held in Brazil, where a portion of the participants seek to learn Portuguese focused on the semantic field related to the topic addressed.

The teaching of PLFE has been growing in recent years and causing the interest of foreign professionals from the most different areas who need to read, write and interact to enter the Brazilian job market. The PLFE relates to the professions or careers of students who need to use Portuguese in work communication situations (SOUSA; LACERDA; SILVA, 2014).

Methodological procedures

This is research with a qualitative approach, which aims to analyze the perceptions of PLE teachers under different concepts/classifications. A questionnaire with open and closed questions was applied to eighteen teachers who work in PLE. Ten of them are Brazilians, one Portuguese, three Chileans, two Argentines, and two Colombians. Such professors teach PLE at universities or institutes, in optional or mandatory courses, in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Colombia. The ages of 79% of respondents ranged from 25 to 35 years; 72% of the population was female. Data were analyzed using the content analysis methodology.

In the elaboration of the questionnaire, two fundamental aspects were considered: the objectives of the work and the fundamental areas that are considered in the PLE. The answers given by the respondents made it possible to collect some data which, in turn, facilitated the inferential process on the five questions raised, their statements were interpreted, explained and some predictions made.

The Google Forms tool was used, which allows the preparation and completion of online questionnaires that are easy to administer. The questionnaire was sent to the teachers' email in July and August 2021. The questionnaire, according to Gil (1999, p.128), can be defined "as the investigation technique composed of a more or less high number of questions presented in writing to people, to know their opinions, beliefs, feelings, interests, expectations, situations experienced, etc."

Analysis of the answers provided by PLE teachers

The first question of the questionnaire referred to the main context of action in the teaching of PLE. For this, we use as alternatives the different concepts used for teaching PLE:

Portuguese as an Additional Language (REIS, 2014); Portuguese as a Host Language (OLIVEIRA, 2019); Language Teaching for Specific Purposes (LOBO, 2017); and Portuguese as a Heritage Language (BRASIL, 2020), and we left an option for the teacher to fill in if it did not fit into any of the options.

Most teachers with whom the question was asked, with a percentage of 98%, admit that they teach Portuguese for specific purposes. We found that even teachers who work in optional/optional PLE courses (Colombia and Argentina) and teachers who work with Portuguese as a host language (Brazil) responded that they work with Portuguese for specific purposes.

The classifications should confuse professors who perform a practice that is not in tune with the name given to the discipline. Therefore, there is a need to think of non-foreign Portuguese, being one more language in acquisition. In this regard, perhaps it would be "more practical" to find a single terminology that covers the needs of students. One of the hypotheses that can generate so many denominations may be related to interculturality in the teaching of PLE, highlighting the need to emphasize some type of demand that includes the sharing of cultures since language teaching is associated with the socio-cultural uses of language.

The second question of the questionnaire aimed to know if the teachers know the different nomenclatures used to name the PLE. For this question, 70% of the teachers said no and 30%, yes. The different linguistic and methodological currents through which the PLE has been passing illustrate that currently there is not a single current that dominates the PLE, as we can glimpse the concepts presented in the theoretical foundation. As in other areas of knowledge and especially in the teaching of foreign languages, there is an almost majority degree of acceptance in terms of adopting various approaches and extracting from them what best fits and adapts to the particular conditions of the teaching process - learning. However, what emerges is that the majority of teacher doesn't know the basic concepts of PLE.

We have seen an increase in PLE in recent years, due to several factors, among others, the interest of countries such as Argentina and Uruguay to integrate it into their education systems. Given this scenario, in the field of PLE teaching, those responsible for teacher education programs seek to include in their curricula new training paths that incorporate the advances obtained over these years in didactic research and the world of PLE, specifically.

The third question aimed to know if the PLE teachers had training in Letters, in another degree or none at all. Of the 18 teachers who answered the questionnaire, only 2

have a specific degree for teaching PLE, 10 are trained in Letters for teaching PLM, 6 have no training in Letters. This question proves the low number of degrees in Brazil to train PLE teachers. Coelho (2017) indicates that only the University of Brasília (UnB), which offers the qualification in Brazilian Portuguese as a Second Language - Licenciatura, which is aimed at students interested in teaching Portuguese to speakers of other languages, whether foreign, indigenous language or sign language. He also mentions the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA), which offers the course of Vernacular Letters and Modern Foreign Language or Portuguese as a Foreign Language and the Federal University of Latin American Integration (UNILA), which offers the Letters – Spanish and Portuguese as a Foreign Language course, as well as State University of Campinas (UNICAMP), which offers the Portuguese as a Second Language/Foreign Language, besides the related licensure courses, it is important to mention the formative activities that are offered by post-graduation programs from various institutions across the country, and a lot of them are the start point for PLE investigations developed during Master's and Doctor's degrees.

In Colombia and Chile there are no degrees to train PLE teachers (ANDRADE-STANZANI, 2021; BEZERRA FERREIRA, 2021), in Argentina there are universities and higher institutes, such as the Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, the Universidad Nacional de Cuyo, the Instituto de Ensino Superior en Lenguas Vivas "Juan Ramón Fernándéz and the Escuela Normal Superior en Lenguas Vivas Sofía Esther Broquen de Spangenberg with the "Profesorado de Portugués".

It appears that concerning teacher education to work in PLE is scarce, considering the specifics of the area, the issue remains very incipient on the issue of existing degrees, which can characterize a teacher unprepared to work in PLE. We identified that the absence of specific training by teachers raises insecurities in teaching practice in two aspects: the pedagogical (how to teach?) and the other disciplinary (what to teach?). Teachers feel insecure for not knowing how to teach PLE. There is recognition of the need for pedagogical knowledge that guides and situates the teaching of PLE. In this sense, it is necessary to reflect on the pedagogical practice based on dialogues between theory and practice on the various existing concepts of PLE in the training process.

In the fourth question, we asked what didactic material the PLE teacher uses in their classes. For the question above, 95% answered that they use PLE and PLM textbooks as didactic material for teaching PLE grammar and that they also prepare their material. Two questions emerge from this answer: on the one hand, that teachers are dynamic and work with various types of teaching materials to have a diversified class, which is a teaching

quality; on the other hand, that the teacher does not have a guide on which teaching material to use and ends up using all that is available to him. Considering that in the teaching-learning process of PLE (and of any area), didactic materials are an essential element, we understand that those chosen are alternatives for the development of this process. Soon, it is expected that those materials help the development of the students' communicative abilities, as well as their discursive and cultural abilities.

Faced with this issue, we inferred that the difficulties reported by 91% of the respondents were the low training for teaching PLE and, as a consequence, the choice of the "most appropriate" teaching material that meets the demand of the specificity of Portuguese for foreigners. Expressions such as "I was not prepared" or "I am very disoriented" show this situation. Another issue concerns the lack of knowledge of grammar, which became a major obstacle: "Many times I could not give grammatical explanations. At the university, pragmatics and discourse analysis work a lot, but morphosyntax is 'disused' and this is very serious for a PLE teacher. Students want a good grammar explanation. It is not enough to tell them 'This is not said like that', but why. I think programs should be strong in grammar." From this question, we infer why most teachers choose to use grammar as the main didactic material for teaching PLE, even though many reported that they are not sure of the most appropriate methodology, as well as some report that they do not know how to adequately explain the elements of the grammar of Portuguese, especially the more complex structures.

The fifth question asked if the teacher considered that he used a specific methodology for teaching PLE. This question showed that 80% of teachers do not use different methodologies for teaching PLE. According to the result, we infer those teachers do not make a difference between teaching mother tongue and teaching a foreign language, in this case, Portuguese. Foreign language teaching methodologies have evolved throughout history, mainly from linguistic theories, which reflect on pedagogical practices and language teaching curricula. Therefore, it is important that teachers, curriculum "designers" know the concepts that underlie the teaching and learning of a language. The teacher must have pedagogical knowledge to determine which is the most appropriate methodology but also to reflect on the adequacy of methodologies in the PLE curriculum.

In this sense, there is still a need for a critical stance about role of language teaching, when only 20% of teachers said that they differentiate the methodologies in the teaching of PLE and PLM. This proves that teachers were trained to teach Portuguese as their mother tongue, without specific training in PLE, which denotes a need for a change in Portuguese

teacher training curricula, even if it is for the mother tongue, but that there are disciplines that focus on in PLE in the curricula of Letters courses.

Final considerations

The analysis of the questionnaire reveals that teachers who teach PLE in four countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Colombia) are mostly composed of teachers trained not only in Letters and who have a similar profile, with common perceptions when teaching PLE under different conceptions. From these insights, we can point out:

- Teachers who do not have sufficient theoretical knowledge about the various conceptions that exist about PLE teaching;

- The need to create more degrees in Letters to train PLE teachers or, at least, to reformulate the curriculum of the Letters courses with insertions of subjects focused on the specifics of PLE;

- The teaching of Portuguese to foreigners has little scientific and didactic production focused on pedagogical practice, perhaps due to the lack of consistency of linguistic and educational policies directed to the area;

- There is not always a reason for the use of several classifications for the teaching of Portuguese to speakers of other languages, as the concepts are often confused and end up in practice having the same pedagogical approach;

- The need to offer teachers spaces for continuing education and reflection with their academic peers;

- The teacher cannot stick to one of the terminologies;

- As a provocation, would it be the case to remove the character of a foreign language?

From this perspective, the professors' answers constitute an appeal to reflect on the teaching of PLE they are offering to students at the university, whether in optional or mandatory courses. This work leads us to think about the possibility of "de-foreign" the teaching of PLE more, which leads us to understand that the many terms to conceptualize PLE, in practice, are not always justified, as it would be to carry out a division of Portuguese that is the same. The difference is, possibly, in the way of approaching and thematizing to meet the demand of the student in the acquisition phase of Portuguese as a foreign language, as a second language, or as an additional language to communicate.

We hope, as a partial result, to have found clarification for the real need for universities to create various terminologies, which makes it difficult to understand whether or not there is an

equivalence between them. We believe that there will be a significant conceptual and methodological advance, as this study will bring contributions to other researchers who focus on the themes of PLE teaching.

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